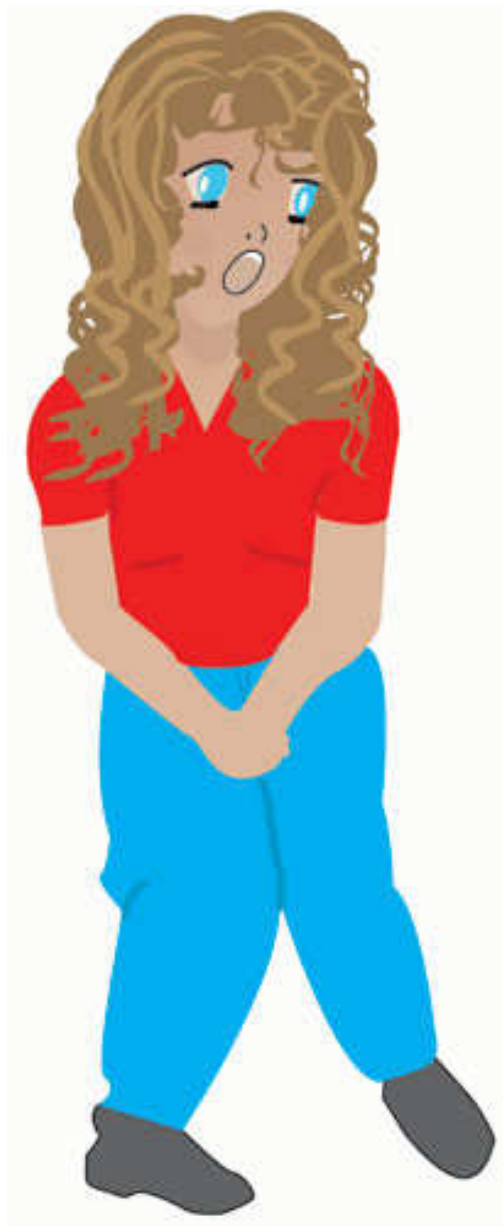


The Little Dandelion



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The Little Dandelion

It was late spring and the weather was warm for the time of year and sitting at the edge of the village pond was a wild flower called Dandelion. Dandelion was a little hunched up, feeling rather sorry for herself because she felt so plain and ugly that nobody ever bothered to look at her, instead they usually trod on her, ~ “Ooh, ouch” she cried, but nobody ever seemed to hear her cries. People just walked all over her without a thought in the world ~ they were more interested in going about their business without a care for anyone but themselves.



One day whilst sitting on her own once more, for what seemed like hours, a young girl called Rebecca came to the pond with her easel and paints. Rebecca sat down and happened to look down at the ground and noticed poor Dandelion and said to her, "Oh dear look at you; you are such a poor little wild Dandelion – so downtrodden and sad looking! – tell you what, I will sit next to you today and keep you company."



Well, Dandelion, as you can imagine, was so taken aback to think that anyone had actually bothered to look at her, let alone talk or want to sit next to her, suddenly found her voice, which she forgot that

she still had, and replied, weakly, “Oh thank you so much for talking to me ~ I haven’t heard a voice in ages.”

Startled! Rebecca looked all around to see where the voice was coming from; she put her fingers to her ears and wriggled them, and rubbed the side of her head in disbelief! ~ thinking that she must be hearing things. “Down here,” she could hear a small voice saying, “Here I am ~ look, down here!” Well, you can imagine Rebecca’s amazement when she realised that the voice she heard was that of Dandelion. “H-hello,” said Rebecca, “you can talk?” “Yes,” said Dandelion of course I can talk.” “I am no different from anybody else really, but I never have anyone to talk to so my voice is a little

weak because it hasn't been used in such a long time." "My name's Rebecca but most people call me Becky," she said as she introduced herself to Dandelion. "Pleased to m-meet you," stammering with surprise, "Likewise," replied, Dandelion.

"You are absolutely right of course – I am sad, because I am just a plain old Dandelion; and nobody ever bothers to stop and talk to me and yet many people walk past this pond every day. They pick the Daises and turn them into pretty bracelets and necklaces. They pick the Buttercups and hold them under their chins to see if any of them like butter, but still ignore me and say that I'm ugly and plain. When I'm asleep during the Winter months, I know it's stupid of me really, but

I dream of being a pretty wildflower such as a Buttercup or Daisy, but above all, I dream I am a perfect yellow Rose just like that beautiful Rose a little further down



the bank, except that one is a beautiful Red Rose and I want to be a beautiful Yellow Rose.

Then I wake up and realise it was all just a silly dream.” “There’s nothing wrong with dreaming,” replied Becky. “Dreams can often come true if you are good and kind!”

Becky said “c’mon it’s such a beautiful sunny morning we must try and cheer you up somehow.” Dandelion said, “Oh that would be nice, I would love to be cheered up!” Becky said, “I know, we will do a painting of the pond,” and as she busied

herself setting up her easel, paints and jar of water for washing her brushes, she made a makeshift easel for Dandelion too from some stiff card she had in her bag and propped it up beside a little stone. With all these tasks done, she sat down beside her and said, "You can share my paints if you like."

They both sat there quietly painting for what seemed like hours. Dandelion hadn't felt this happy in ages. She told Becky that she wasn't so lonely when the Buttercups and Daisies and other flowers lived here, even though they were quite rude to her at times, but they all decided to move further down the bank of the pond to be nearer to "red Rose" because she was beautiful and they

didn't want to be seen with Dandelion for some reason, probably because of her ugliness, and they always giggled when people trod on her and called her ugly. But through all this, Dandelion never complained or said anything bad about them! Becky was a little saddened by this, but kept her thoughts to herself for fear of spoiling Dandelion's brief moment of happiness. Eventually, Becky said, "Well Dandelion it's time for me to go home for my tea, but if you like I will visit you again next Sunday."

The following Sunday as promised, Becky returned to the same spot and sat down beside Dandelion. As each week went by, they sat quietly and spent many

happy hours together in the warm sunshine painting, reading and sometimes just chatting. By this time Dandelion was so happy that she had totally forgotten all about her dream of being a Buttercup or a Daisy let alone a beautiful yellow “Rose”. Becky always brought with her a flask of nice cold water and every now and then would gently release a few droplets onto Dandelion’s petals to keep her fresh and moist on those very hot summer days.



Dandelion lowered her eyelids with such contentment and was so grateful, she realised just how lucky she was that she had met and made a really true friend. She wanted it to last forever! In fact she was so happy that

gradually over the weeks her confidence grew and grew, and she appeared livelier and less hunched up; with her yellow petals all a-glow in the sunshine that passers by began to notice and even



started saying “Hello” to her. She held her head high and stood proudly nodding, smiling and saying “Hello”, to just about everyone who came her way.

But just like all other years the days became shorter and the summer eventually came to an end. With some sadness Becky eventually said to Dandelion, “I won’t be able to visit you anymore until the spring and I will miss you terribly.” Dandelion answered, “I will miss you too. But I intend to have a

better sleep this winter than I did last, and there's no point staying awake when it's cold and bleak." Becky thought for a moment and said, "I can see the sense in that if you have to live outside all year round." With that, Becky started packing away her things to go home, taking great care that she left no litter lying around. Whilst she was packing away though, she hadn't realised that purely by accident she had gathered up a small branch from an old Rose and accidentally brushed past the bottom of Dandelion's stalk making a small scratch. "Oh, I'm so sorry Dandelion," Becky said. "It's nothing, I hardly felt a thing," replied Dandelion. With that, they said their goodbyes and Becky skipped off home safe in the knowledge that

Dandelion was about to go to sleep for the winter, neither of them realising that Dandelion was left with a small thorn stuck in the bottom of her stalk.

Dandelion then put her head down under her petals, and snuggled down into a long, deep sleep. Autumn came and went, then came the winter winds and rain, followed by heavy snowfall and Dandelion slept on and on, dreaming of last summer and the lovely days she and Becky had spent together. The months and weeks went by quite slowly until suddenly one morning spring burst forth bringing with it an abundance of beautiful spring flowers with birds singing their songs from morning till night – everything was Wonderful again.

Stretching and yawning Dandelion woke up and as she was lifting her eyes from under her petals, she saw Becky in the distance walking towards her. “Oh, I’m sorry,” said Becky “Did I wake you?” “Oh, no,” replied Dandelion, “It’s great to see you.” ~ “you too,” replied Becky, “I have missed you.” But then as Becky looked at Dandelion, she thought how odd, realising that there was something completely different about her, “Oh, look at you?” she said excitedly. “W-what,” said Dandelion a little alarmed, “Is there something wrong with me?” “No, no quite the opposite,” said Becky “You have changed ~ but it’s very strange you are no longer a Dandelion you are a beautiful, perfect



yellow Rose.” “Really, Becky don’t be such a tease,” “Trust me Dandelion, if it weren’t for your voice or knowing the spot where you live, I wouldn’t have even recognised you.”

With that Becky needed some proof so she quickly began fumbling in her bag where she kept her tin of paints and said,



“Look, just look at your reflection in the lid of the tin.” And sure enough, much to Dandelion’s amazement there was a beautiful yellow

“Rose” staring back at her. Dandelion stood there, this can’t be me she thought, rubbing her eyes in disbelief. She was so happy; she didn’t know whether to laugh or cry, she was so overjoyed; as she

really had become a beautiful yellow “Rose”. Becky looked closely at her petals, then her stalk and thought goodness, how could it have happened when at last she noticed a tiny little thorn stuck in the bottom of her stalk with lots of little green shoots growing from it. “I think I know what’s happened!” she said. “Do you remember when we said our goodbyes at the end of last summer I accidentally scratched you with a branch from that old Rose? - well, I think a thorn must have been left behind and by some miracle or perhaps magic even; it has grown, and transformed you into a perfect Rose!” Amazed! Becky said, “You are so beautiful Rose.” “Rose why are you calling me Rose?” replied Dandelion, “Well,” said Becky “We can

hardly call you Dandelion any more now that you are a perfect “Rose” can we?”

As time went by, Rose produced more and more beautiful yellow Roses that almost everyone in the village stopped to smell her beautiful perfume and to admire her beautiful blooms; even the Daises moved closer to her again and the Buttercups came too, along with many other wonderful wild flowers. They said how glad they were that the horrible Dandelion had at last gone away. Rose smiled to herself, thinking, “If only you knew.” But above all, Dandelion or “Rose” as she is now known was never downtrodden or laughed at ever again and what’s more if any Dandelion’s came to live nearby, she was never unkind to

them; making sure that the Buttercups, Daisies and other wild flowers treated them with kindness too. Becky visited less frequently these days because Rose had so many other flowers nearby to keep her company; but needless to say, they remained firm friends forever.

The End

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